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Failure to Protect: Why the International Community Will Fail to Respond to the Cultural Genocide of Turkish Cypriot People

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**FAILURE TO PROTECT:
WHY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WILL FAIL TO RESPOND
TO THE CULTURAL GENOCIDE OF TURKISH CYPRIOT PEOPLE**

Abstract

The international community has time and again committed to never let genocide occur again – however, multiple bouts of genocide have occurred since the Holocaust. This, in addition to the current quandaries surrounding the Uyghurs of China, points to the fact that the international laws and institutions have loopholes that allow for genocides – especially those that enact structural and cultural violence without necessarily employing direct violence – to ‘slip through’.

This has been the case in spite of R2P policies being in place. In this paper, I examine the inability of international systems to capture ‘cultural genocide’ or intervene in it through a case study of Northern Cyprus. This study will shed light on the shortcomings of the system, which may also illuminate why the international community is likely to fail to protect the Uyghurs and many others in the future – unless the current understandings of and approaches to atrocities change.

Key words: F2P = Failure to protect, cultural genocide

Introduction:

In the academic as well as the policy-making worlds, it is widely recognized that the main, most devastating type of conflict for the post-Cold War period up to this day has been intrastate conflict. According to Evans, “....the debate about humanitarian intervention has not gone away; nor will it go away....” (80). In fact, Evans stresses that intrastate conflict continues to be the norm when it comes to “serious violence,” citing that “Of the fifty-six armed conflicts between 1990 and 2000 identified by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) as major,fifty-three of them were intrastate” (80).

Therefore and unsurprisingly, the current, mainstream paradigm of international action is that of *humanitarian intervention*. While civil wars are the most common type of intrastate conflicts, the one which has received the most attention per manifestation has been that of genocide. Genocideⁱ is one of the most heinous crimes against humanity, and one which, if identified, the international community *must intervene into immediately* to prevent or stop it. Such interventions, in their turn, are justified mainly through the languages of *the Genocide Convention* (1948)ⁱⁱ and *the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)* (2005)ⁱⁱⁱ. This type of intervention attempts to address the problem of genocide by relegating state sovereignty to a subservient position to human well-being and dignity; in fact, sovereignty appears to impinge upon the latter within this framework. The debates on the Genocide Convention and the R2P are plentiful yet not really fruitful, as will be argued in the third section. While the main focus of the academia has been to

find better definitions and manners of execution for this paradigm (i.e. mostly methodological), this paper will diverge from the academic conversation at that point.

This paper posits that there is a state- and (physical) violence-dependence for qualifying *what genocide is* and for *justification of humanitarian intervention* under the Convention and the R2P. My ultimate research puzzle is as such: can the Convention and R2P provide protection for the groups of people who wish to preserve a distinct identity and land from *physically nonviolent crimes against humanity*, especially in the case of a *cultural genocide*? For the purposes of this paper, I will attempt to only partially answer this research puzzle through a case study on the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), utilizing this more specific puzzle: is culture a human quality that needs to be preserved, and if so, why is the cultural genocide against the Turkish Cypriot population in the TRNC not resulting in international humanitarian action^{iv}?

Cultural Genocide?.... and The Case of the TRNC:

Why Is the Concept of Cultural Genocide ‘Useful’?:

The term cultural genocide is one which was proposed by Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term *genocide* in reaction to the events of the Holocaust and internationally normalized and mainstreamed the latter term through extensive lobbying, leading to the Genocide Convention. Lemkin wanted to employ a cultural component to genocide and had dubbed this *vandalism*^v, but this was removed from the final document. To this day, the definition of *cultural genocide* and its place in the realm of international law or humanitarian intervention remains unclear, which is problematic as “The fact that the Genocide Convention does not define cultural genocide is fundamental to how some conflicts are engaged and others ignored” (Terrence Lyons, electronic

correspondence with the author, 12/01/2011) – if we are to take international law and institutions seriously.

Henceforth, it is not surprising that many scholars and practitioners *need more convincing* as to the usefulness of the term, and as to whether cultures should be preserved through the international system. For example, Associate Professor Terrence Lyons has stated that “I need a bit more convincing on the usefulness of the concept of cultural genocide, in part because culture is constantly changing and fluid. If a culture is lost because so few people participate in the activities associated with that culture, is it genocide?this freezing (and commodification) of culture reinforces the marginalization of [such] peoples” (Electronic correspondence with author, 12/01/2011). Lyons provides us with legitimate concerns, and if we are to claim that *cultural genocide* is a problem which requires international attention, then we must engage them.

First and foremost, then, we must begin by attempting to coin *what culture is*, for the concept has become “complex, variable, multivocal, and, above all, contested” (Donnelly 2003:26, as quoted in Goodale, 72). According to Pruitt and Kim, “....culture is the set of shared and enduring meanings, values, and beliefs that characterize national, ethnic, or other groups” (56, quoting Faure & Rubin 1993) and “....is an important determinant of people’s attitudes, self-construal [sic], and behavior...” (56), and both Goodale (69) and Korostelina (40, quoting Hampden-Turner 1997-2000) add that artifacts/products also constitute part of cultures. Through his use of the term *vandalism*, we can clearly observe that Lemkin was focusing more on the destruction of historically and culturally important artifacts of a culture when he coined the term *cultural genocide*. I believe this conception of the term is important, but falls short; it is clear that cultures are bigger than their products/artifacts.

Avruch (1998, as quoted in Ramsbotham et. al., 309) underlines some inadequacies in the treatment of culture within the field of conflict resolution, two of which are of import for our purposes: that culture is treated independently from human agency and that it is consistent over time. Therefore, artifacts and their destruction, *vandalism*, can be treated easily as they do constitute the part of culture easily accepted in the field. So, where can we locate the human and changing aspects of *culture*?

Individuals (i.e. humans) come into the culture not only as its subjects but also its *qualifiers*. People are directly affected by their culture; its oppression is detrimental. As underlined above, culture is a **determinant** of individuals' behaviors and attitudes as well as and more importantly, their self-construction; i.e. culture gives individuals a sense of a coherent self – and identity^{vi}. Korostelina confirms this when she underlines that “Clearly...types of culture have an impact on the process of identity formation” (44). This, coupled with the fact that “Psychological analyses.... show that individualism and collectivism are ingrained in the psyches of individuals” (Korostelina, 42), leads us to deduce that *culture* is a determinant of both collective and individual identities. Studies of identity show that it is central to human cognition of and responses to the environment – hence, identity is a *basic human need*, emphasized by *needs theorists* under the name of need for “Belongingness/Love” (Dugan). Moreover, as Goodale aptly points out (75), it is featured *as a universal human right* in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights's 22nd article. Summarily, culture is a necessity for the human existence (as a need) and dignified life (as a right) of an individual. Henceforth, *cultural crimes* should not be ignored and cultures need be preserved; but up to a point. I believe we will be able to better define where this point is through engaging our question about *the changing nature of cultures*.

According to Avruch (1998, p. 20, as quoted in Ramsbotham et. al., 309) “....culture is, to some extent always situational, flexible, and responsive to the exigencies of the worlds that individuals confront,” which is in line with Lyons’s worries in regards to the usefulness of *cultural genocide* as a concept. Indeed, culture and cultural identities are defined and re-defined many times over, a process which Tilly dubs as the changing of social boundaries (given cultural identities are social ones). However, Tilly identifies five mechanisms of such change: encounter, imposition, borrowing, conversation, and incentive shift (136), to which we might add disincentive shift^{vii}. Out of these six mechanisms of change, three are problematic: *imposition*, *borrowing*, and *disincentive shift*; they are forceful, destructive, create inequalities, etc. On the one hand, Lyons underlines the *natural transformation of a culture* as its original form probably no longer helps individuals in confronting their world. On the other hand, if such changes are enforced in psychologically and ‘existentially’ torturous and damaging – dare we say, *inhuman*, – manners, and if this is a calculated ‘attack’ on the receiving culture, aimed at its *elimination* and *replacement*, then I believe the term cultural genocide becomes an analytically relevant tool to prevent a physically nonviolent denial of needs and rights.

The 8 Stages of Genocide of Gregory H. Stanton and The Case of the TRNC:

The process of answering the research puzzle of this paper involves a case study of a conflict in Cyprus. To begin with, we have to underline a certain academic and political framework which has traditionally been applied to the analysis of Cyprus, which is immediately invoked through terms such as *the Cypriot/Cyprus Conflict*. Out of the twelve resources on the Cypriot Conflict utilized or simply reviewed for this paper, all but one (Hasguler) treats the conflict as being strictly between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities, which is a view held by aid

and conflict resolution agencies, such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the USAID. Turkey and the Turkish community (dubbed *settlers* by the Greek Cypriot community) are seen as being involved in Cyprus only as a matter of foreign policy. In fact, this approach to international, multiparty conflicts through a bi-communal framework is a commonly employed one. This paper will posit that there might be a need to revisit this traditionalist, common approach to the Cypriot Conflict, and other conflicts of its ilk – which is a proposition supported by Olgun (252, first full paragraph). This new approach to the Cypriot Conflict appears to be needed on the grounds of the following assumptions: the Turkish Cypriots are being subjected to a form of *cultural genocide*^{viii} by the Turkish government and some Turkish Cypriot elites. This assumption, I must admit, is not one which I have independently deduced; in fact, I first heard the allegations of a cultural genocide against the Turkish Cypriots in the TRNC, where I was from mid-July to mid-August, 2011. The suggestion for a novel approach to the Cypriot Conflict borne from the assumption of cultural genocide would be that there are two conflicts in the island: one between the Greek Cypriot community and the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot communities and another between the Turkish Cypriot community and Turkey. This paper will focus on the latter Cypriot conflict^{ix}.

Afore we can proceed to answer our research puzzle, which is that of *why does the cultural genocide in the TRNC not result in action from international community*, we must first adopt a framework to assert through a case study whether there, indeed, is an ongoing cultural genocide playing out against the Turkish Cypriot community – regardless of whether the international community also perceives it as such. For this purpose, we need an objective, generally-applicable framework to assess whether the events transpiring in the TRNC constitute an instance of genocide or not^x. For this purpose, the best framework is provided by Stanton, who calls the said

framework *The 8 Stages of Genocide*. These 8 stages involve: 1) **categorization**, which distinguishes people based on certain criteria; 2) **symbolization**, through which people are assigned names or symbols to demonstrate their membership to the category; 3) **dehumanization**, where one “One group denies the humanity of the other group” (ibid.); 4) **organization**, where planning for genocide is carried out by the State (which might involve empowering non-state actors to carry the genocide out for the purposes of denial of state responsibility); 5) **polarization**, where the groups are driven apart; 6) **preparation**, where people are driven to *ghettos* and where their property is taken away forcefully; 7) **extermination**, which involves the carrying out of mass killings, and 8) **denial**, where the perpetrators of the genocide cover up the evidence and deny the existence of any crime or the responsibility thereof. Our case study of the TRNC will thus involve determining whether the case fits this framework, and if so, how far along on the *stages* the TRNC is.

First and foremost, however, let us commence with some background information. Cyprus is a relatively small island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, which is “....about half the size of Wales, or seven tenths the size of Connecticut” (Dodd 2001, 2), while being “....30 times the size of Malta” (Zeff & Pirro, 386) – the latter being the smallest Mediterranean island. However, Cyprus has received size-wise disproportionately huge amounts of attention, as it enjoys a strategically important position in the region due to its proximity to maritime gateways as well as to Turkey and the Middle East (ibid., 382). This is especially true vis-à-vis Cyprus during the Cold War, as its geostrategic importance was accentuated due mainly to “....its proximity to the countries of the Baghdad Pact, one of the many US-inspired alliances surrounding the USSR as part of Washington’s containment policy” (ibid., 382).

Currently, Cyprus is divided, with 37% of its lands under the Turkish control, where Turkish Cypriots have declared statehood under the name of the TRNC, which is not recognized by any country except Turkey. For a detailed historical review of how the island has come to be divided between its two communities (the other being the Greek Cypriots, who control 63% of the island), which pays homage to both communities' interpretations of the conflict, see Dodd 2001, Chapter 2, pp. 7-24. However, establishing such a history falls outside of the scope of this paper. What is important for our current analysis is that, since the partition in 1974, the Turkish Cypriot community lives in relative economic, political, and social isolation from the rest of the world, and is completely dependent on aid and trade from the Republic of Turkey, so much so that some speculate that it is *a de facto province* (the 82nd, to be precise) of Turkey^{xi}. Currently, this state of affairs is negatively affecting the stability of the tentative peace in the Eastern Mediterranean region by pitting the Republic of Cyprus, the EU, and Greece against Turkey (together with all the parties' allies) regarding the search for hydrocarbons, as well. As such, promptly dealing with cultural genocide and other situations of negative peace (i.e. cases without overt violence) should be some of the more prominent goals of our international community and institutions.

Categorization, Symbolization, Polarization, and Dehumanization in the TRNC:

The categorization and symbolization of the Turkish Cypriot people apparently began immediately after 1974, together with the initial wave of Turkish immigrants. According to Mehmetcik, "A very considerable problem manifested when the cultural differences became apparent. The Turkish villagers hailing from Anatolia and the Turkish Cypriots, whose living styles mirrored or approximated that of the British due to the island being under British rule until 1960, could not much warm up to one another. Couple with this the many cultural differences from fact

that the Cypriots could not speak proper Turkish to the fact that they wore miniskirts, whence came the Anatolian villagers' labeling of 'gavur'^{xii}, which actually started the distancing of the Cypriot and Turkish Turks who came from the same lineage and who shared many similarities" (152). Henceforth, we can observe that ethnicity, religion^{xiii}, and language were the categories through which the Cypriot Turks were *categorized* as **gavur**, and that language, lifestyle, observance and knowledge of religious tenets, and looks were used to *symbolize* their category since 1974. The fact that such divisions have persisted until today is clear from Hudaoglu's article, which is a reaction to the declarations that Turkish Cypriots were lacking in spiritual terms, and that they were not Turkic enough. One addition to the symbolization of the gavur status of the Turkish Cypriots is 'the red passport' – passports signifying citizenship of the Republic of Cyprus, which is regarded as confirmation of non-Turkic and traitor statuses of the many Turkish Cypriots who obtained it.

The comments left below a news piece on a peaceful-protest-turned-sour^{xiv} drive the point home: Turkish Cypriots – although mainly in reaction to those who protest the Turkish policies in the TRNC – are collectively labeled, to name a few 'choice' ones: gavur bastards, the bastards of Grivas (the leader of the Greek junta who initiated the 1974 attempts to annex Cyprus to Greece), fosterlings^{xv}, enemies of Turks, and fungi. We must note, of course, that such discrimination is not one sided; Professor Erdal Isik recalls hatred exhibited towards Turks by Turkish Cypriots in the post-74 period^{xvi}, mocking comments of the 'religiosity' of Turks run rampant^{xvii}, and the labels of **gaco** and **garasakal** (blackbeard) – categorizing and discriminating based on physical appearances and assumed levels of education – are utilized by Turkish Cypriots^{xviii}. Moreover, Erhurman and Hasguler's works share a common, underlying theme that, while the preservation of the Turkish

Cypriot group identity and culture is a worthy goal, it should not be pursued through *othering* a group of people and discriminating against the said people (especially see Erhurman, 261-291; Hasguler, 1-19), which, by deduction, leads to the conclusion that such othering and discrimination processes are already in place. Yet, and all in all, while less apparent in the official, statesmen-level, it is apparent that the four stages of genocide of concern to this sub-section have all taken place in the TRNC, albeit penetrating the fabric of Turkish Cypriot life to varying levels of depth and strength.

Organization and Preparation in the TRNC:

Under Stanton's 8-stage-framework, organization and preparation are quite similar; the former deals with the gathering of resources to the perpetrators and leading to sub-perpetrators' mobilization, whereas the latter deals with the removal of resources from the populations to be subjected to genocide. At this point, we must recognize the fact that, in general, it is commonly accepted that *states* are the main perpetrators behind genocidal attempts. Therefore, these two components of Stanton's framework require us to define: who functions as the state in the TRNC and who the perpetrators and sub-perpetrators are for the case of cultural genocide at hand.

The Question of Statehood:

There are three possible candidates when it comes to who functions as the state in Northern Cyprus: a) the government of the TRNC, b) the government of the Republic of Cyprus, and c) the government of the Republic of Turkey. Initially, the Turkish Cypriot community ran its own political administration, separately yet not as an *independent state* (accepted *de jure* and *de facto* under the *doctrine of necessity* under the rules of international law^{xix}, starting with the 'autonomous' Turkish Cypriot Federate State (TCFS) from mid-1974 to 15th November 1983, when

the TRNC was declared as an independent state. It was at this point that the UN called for the international community *not to recognize* this unilaterally declared state^{xx}; likewise, the European Union (EU) made similar calls, with the European Court of Justice eventually deciding to ban trade of goods with certificates of origin from the TRNC (Ozdeser and Ozyigit, 89). Certainly, the United Nations and the European Union as well as most of the international community have, time and again – while sometimes declaring their sympathy with the Turkish Cypriots, – qualified both the TRNC and the Turkish influence in the North of Cyprus as illegal and condemned both. Eventually, during the European Union accession of the Republic of Cyprus, it was affirmed that the international community regarded the Republic of Cyprus as the *de jure* state for the *whole island*, while only qualifying the North of Cyprus as *non-government control territories* (see Zeff and Pirro, Chapter 19). We can therefore observe that the *de jure* statehood in the Northern Cyprus has clearly been allocated to the Republic of Cyprus. However, we can expect that *de jure* statehood would not be sufficient for the organization of genocide and the preparations for this purpose; in fact, it would require a *de facto* statehood in these territories, which the Republic of Cyprus apparently lacks (for they do not control the territory).

Having eliminated Republic of Cyprus from our list of possible perpetrators, we must then decide which of our two remaining candidates holds the *de facto* power of rule in the TRNC. According to Lacher and Kaymak, “....the TRNC is a “failing state”; its legitimacy has eroded.... [there is] wide-ranging skepticism as to the quality of TRNC’s internal sovereignty” (149). Additionally, according to Hakki, the TRNC at best qualifies as a *puppet state*, one declared by another state which holds the former’s lands illegally, under international law’s Stimson Doctrine (61). Confirming our previous observations, Hakki underlines that, under law, these *puppet states*

have been historically regarded as *void* and *nonexistent* (61). Hakki adds that “The TRNC’s economy is absolutely dependent on Turkey, letting alone the fact that it does not have a national anthem.... Letting alone the fact that Turkish Liras are used as the monetary units, most of the TRNC’s budget is approved in Ankara and only through the money coming [from Ankara] can the budget be realized” (64), whereby the Republic of Turkey holds absolute sway over domestic and foreign politics of Turkish Cypriots. Coupled with the fact that the continued presence of the Turkish Military on the island being an implicit threat to any claims for sovereignty by the TRNC (ibid., 61-64), this eliminates the possibility of the government of TRNC as a state.

According to the international community, that is *precisely* the meaning of all this; the Republic of Turkey is, indeed, the *de facto* state in the North of Cyprus. On this particular issue, the European Court of Human Rights has produced three declarations which speak directly to this point, all concerning the human rights case of *Loizidou v. Turkey*^{xxi}. Firstly, on the 62nd paragraph of their judgment released on 23 March 1995 declares that there is no analytical or empirical need to differentiate between the direct actions of the Turkish military and those of the *subordinate local administration* in north Cyprus; that the Republic of Turkey was responsible, *de facto*, for the actions of both. Lastly, in the 56th paragraph on their judgment dated 18 December 1996, ECHR declared that “It is not necessary to determine whether....Turkey actually exercises detailed control over the policies and actions of the authorities of the ‘TRNC’. It is obvious from the large number of troops engaged in active duties in northern Cyprus that her army exercises effective overall control over that part of the island. Such control....entails her responsibility for the policies and actions of the ‘TRNC’” (edited from quote in Erhurman, 137; footnote 16). Summarily, the ECHR clearly emphasizes the facts that: Turkey is in *de facto* control of northern Cypriot territories;

Turkey is in *de facto* control of the political administration in the said territories; whereby Turkey is, in the eyes of the international community and under international law, responsible for the *human rights abuses* – and, by extension, a genocide entailing either physical or cultural violence as they both violate rights.

Organization and Preparation:

According to Stanton, organization is the accrument of political resources and the resources for violence *at*, and the monopolization of the said resources *by* the state, whereas preparation comes with the denial and withdrawal of the said resources, along with economic ones (esp. land) to the targeted group of people, as well as of drawing up ‘death lists’ – the last of which, for the purposes of this paper, we will not look for in the case of Cyprus (as underlined above, cultural genocide is bloodless violence)^{xxii}.

The State, i.e. the Republic of Turkey, indeed monopolizes the resources for violence and *all possible political resources*, including the majority in the TRNC whereby any referendum or plebiscite in Northern Cyprus will reflect Turkey’s and not Turkish Cypriots’ point of view, and where all elections are likely reflect Turkey’s will, excepting local ones. First and foremost, aside from the fact that Turkey has between 30 to 40 thousand active soldiers on the island, another commonly known fact is that all armed forces in the TRNC, including the police, report directly to the Turkish Armed Forces; i.e. they are neither politically nor socially accountable. This assures that Turkey has a monopoly on the resources for violence in the TRNC; in fact, on multiple occasions this past year, the armed forces used disproportionate and *non-legal* violent methods on civilians, nonviolent protesters, injuring many and detaining even more without proper cause^{xxiii}. They also and especially targeted groups which protested Turkish presence on the island

during the Turkish P.M., Erdogan's visit^{xxiv}. I was also a personal witness to the abovementioned events. The section on the question of statehood has adequately demonstrated the fact that the government of TRNC is but a puppet of the government of the Republic of Turkey. Clearly, the *organization* stage has thoroughly been carried out in Cyprus.

Turkey's monopolization of the political resources did not restrict itself to the strictly political realm; Turkey forcefully – yet lawfully, through 'laws' made for this purpose by the government of the TRNC^{xxv} – changed the demographics of north Cyprus to capture the majority so that she could assure her will would be done in the TRNC. Many authors mourned the fact that reliable information on TRNC's population was not available. Luckily for this paper, after a five year interval from 2006, a TRNC population census was conducted through the government on 12/04/2011, which is recognized by the United Nations^{xxvi}. This was a *de facto* census, as so named by the government of TRNC. Interestingly, the numbers provided are as follows: The population of TRNC is 294 thousand and 906 people^{xxvii}, with substantially more than half declaring Cypriot origins^{xxviii}. If these numbers are to be trusted, the Turkish Cypriot population outnumbers the Turkish population of the island. However, there is cause for doubt.

According to many newspaper columnists^{xxix}, political parties^{xxx}, and workers' and government employees' unions and other civil society organizations^{xxxixxxxii}, these numbers were heavily deflated. Additional claims state that the census suffered from planned exclusion of peoples, including approximately 5,000 houses only in one city. Due to these differing claims and a lack of neutral, empirical evidence, we must use deductive reasoning, through which we can evaluate the claims of Turkish Cypriots being outnumbered.

First and foremost, we can observe the number of in-use cars and cell phones in the TRNC. To begin with, I was able to obtain the numbers of subscribers to the two largest cellphone service providers in the TRNC, Vodafone/Telsim^{xxxiii} and KKTCell^{xxxiv}. By simple addition, we can deduce cellphone subscribers number at 616 thousand. Moreover, according to Durduran, the number of cars in the North is 225 thousand^{xxxv}. From these numbers, we can deduce a total population of more than 500 thousand, of which upwards of 300 thousand can be estimated to be Turkish nationals, two thirds of whom would be undocumented^{xxxvi}. Henceforth, while not conclusive due to a lack of concrete evidence, we can claim with confidence that Turkish nationals most probably outnumber Cypriot nationals in the TRNC. Given that *democracy* is defined in the most limited manner worldwide as *majority rules*, this follows that Turkish people and thus Turkey *de facto* rules in the sociopolitical landscape of the TRNC. Also, this demonstrates that the Republic of Turkey has systematically withdrawn and re-allocated the Turkish Cypriot territory over to the Turkish immigrants.

Execution and Denial in the TRNC?

While similarities between conventional and cultural genocide were meaningful in the treatise of the past six stages – allowing for comparisons, – we must necessarily expect divergences from the conventional norms in the execution and denial of the cultural genocide. One of these divergences comes from the bloodless nature of cultural genocide, whereby the method of execution and the nature of evidence to be covered (mass graves) naturally would not be common with *cultural genocide*. I believe the latter form of genocide, unlike with the conventional genocides which have swift yet wide execution, comes through with long-lasting policies aimed at gradually, yet forcefully eliminating the indigenous culture of a territory, reducing

the number of people subscribing to the target culture over time (forced displacement; incentives to leave and disincentives to stay, forced assimilation etc.) and decreasing the numerical concentration of people subscribing to the target culture over time (through *forced minoritization*, which occurs when a nation exports its citizens to territories she has conquered to the point where the demographics of the said territories are altered). It must be noted that the third method, which is utilized by Turkey in the TRNC, is *strictly against the Geneva Convention of 1949*^{xxxvii}. All in all, I propose that this slow genocide would emulate a natural transformation of a culture through contact and conversation (two other identity transformation mechanisms à la Tilly (136)), as even the people on the ground might not become aware of the cultural genocide they are being subjected to until it is too late.

This appears to be the case when it comes to the TRNC. According to Inatci, the Turkish Cypriots' current uprising against Turkish policies in the TRNC territory, which constitute a last-ditch effort for self-preservation in response to what he dubs the cultural colonialism by Turkey (45), "....demonstrates the politicization of the knowledge that [the Turkish Cypriots] are losing numbers" (41). In the meantime, Turkey downplays the demographic changes it has enacted (as can be seen in the recent census conducted in the TRNC), while also denying its responsibility in the TRNC, claiming that the TRNC is an independent state with its own local administration. The cultural changes, in the meantime, are regarded as nonexistent, as "....those who come are Turks and those who go are Turks" (ibid., 45). Henceforth, we can clearly observe that the 6 ex-facto stages of genocide have already taken place in the TRNC, and the facto and post-facto stages of genocide constitute an ongoing phenomenon.

To conclude, I will let Inatci answer for us the question of whether a cultural genocide is taking place against the Turkish Cypriot community or not: “A certain group of people.... wants to resist this movement for cultural and demographic oppression which aims for the destruction of the Cypriot population and the Cypriot identity. No country can internalize an immigration exceeding its own population.... The *othering technique* of decreasing the social boundaries of a group so much that its members aspire for another identity is one endemic to cultural colonialism” (46). No matter what we label it, there appears to be indeed a cultural genocide taking place in the TRNC. Now to our overarching research question: why does this fact not result in international action?

Humanitarian Intervention, The ‘Ignored’ Focus of the Debates:

Murder is unique in that... it is the one crime in which society has a direct interest.
~ W. H. Auden

The concept of *prevention of genocide* through *humanitarian intervention* was first conceived as a reaction to the events of the Holocaust as well as a retroactive ‘protection’ of Armenians and Christians against the atrocities committed by the Ottoman Empire at the time (Chalk, 150). The two main international declarations which prompted humanitarian intervention against the crime of genocide have been the Genocide Convention and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)^{xxxviii}. Both of these treaties come with considerable shortcomings. On that note, the R2P was developed as a better, alternative principle due to the failure of the Genocide Convention to spur the international community to prevent the crime of genocide. Indeed, the R2P *increases the scope of the Convention* to allow for all crimes of humanity to be responded to with the severity of genocide and clarifies the subservient nature of the nation-state vis-à-vis its people. The debates on the Convention and the R2P follow a similar pattern; according to Evans,

“the [academic scrutiny] has been very comprehensive, addressing not just the legal and moral dilemmas that have been at the heart of most of the academic and policy debate about coercive intervention so far but operational and political issues as well” (80). Summarily, the academic debates have problematized the methodological aspects of the R2P and the Convention (and the articles I have reviewed on this topic mirror this trend), due mainly to the fact that “Much has been written about genocide.... Little has been done to prevent it” (Chalk, 152). Other aspects which have been more than adequately scrutinized are the problems of *definition of groups* and *definition of what constitutes genocide*. While worthy debates, none of these arguments will be engaged for the purposes of this paper; the former because the purpose of this paper is not to offer alternative methodologies, and the latter two because they do not directly relate to our puzzle at hand^{xxxix}.

Our research puzzle is much more specific than *why does R2P not translate into more and/or faster international action*; our research puzzle wonders why the TRNC and cultural genocide are overlooked within the Convention-R2P frameworks. This is not a puzzle which problematizes the methodological aspect of humanitarian intervention; in fact, it is one which problematizes the *ontological* aspects of it. There is reason to believe that these ontological shortcomings might be the cause of the aforementioned methodological frustrations; for if the ontology, i.e. our knowledge, is not complete, can our actions – based on the said knowledge – realistically be expected to produce the desired results? Given this, I will briefly discuss three of the most pertinent shortcomings, vis-à-vis the TRNC, in the norms of humanitarian intervention which I have observed: a) state-dependence; b) violence-dependence; and c) assumption of self-execution of interventions by neutral parties.

State-dependence is a common symptom of anything *international*, as the international community and the international order both treat states as central and ever-present; the international order chiefly does not deal with individuals but states (see Russett and Starr Chapter 3; especially look at 70). Henceforth, it is not surprising that international interventions, such as humanitarian ones, depend on states on many levels: the *states* need to be the perpetrator; the state is the one to be negotiated with; etc. In the case of the TRNC, where there is only circumstantial and certainly interpretive evidence as to *who the state is*, the Convention and R2P fail to make tails and heads of the situation. Moreover and more tragically, the victims of cultural genocide, due to the lack of a legitimate state, cannot make their voices heard in the international community – for only a state’s voice is heard at that level. Erhurman underlines this point strongly when he writes: “The states which are influential in international organizations and international politics never problematized the happenings in North Cyprus. According to them,...it was impossible to discuss or do something concerning the relationship between the State in North Cyprus and its citizens proved impossible in the face of the U.N.S.C.’s resolutions” and that “...the international community was worried that attempts at interventions into the human rights abuses in North Cyprus would be perceived as the recognition of the state there” (206). This is not unique to the TRNC; Somaliland, Taiwan, and Nagorno-Karabakh are just some of the other cases where avoidance of implied recognition trumps humanitarian, justice, etc. concerns of the international community.

Humanitarian intervention, which is a tool to prevent violence, exhibits high levels of violence-dependence; i.e. humanitarian intervention is only really carried out when high levels of physical violence takes place, such as in the case of Rwanda, Libya, and Sudan. The Genocide

Convention relegates the *crime of genocide* to one which is strictly physical by the non-inclusion of a cultural and/or environmental component. The R2P, while calling for ensuring the provision of human needs and rights, *disallows* humanitarian intervention in the absence of high levels of violence, for it underlines confrontational approaches only as *a last resort*, hence forcing the international community to negotiate with the State first. Henceforth, it is not surprising that the international community would fail to take action in the case of the cultural genocide of Turkish Cypriot peoples, for – while some police brutality takes place – there is simply *not enough violence* to shock and awe the international community, and neither to beget action. While UNESCO and other international bodies attempt to preserve cultural artifacts, they – being non-military and non-forceful sources of power – fail to meet the standards of necessary conditions to protect ‘culture’ against organized and violent agents.

Perhaps the most destructive ontological problem of the Convention and R2P frameworks, however, is the *naïve* expectation that the documents will be self-executing, where neutral third-parties to the conflict will *intervene* out of a sense of community and responsibility. This problem is ultimately what makes Hannum dub R2P as *pastiche* rather than *paradigm* (135), for the R2P . Indeed, the international community has lately intervened into Cote d’Ivoire and Libya, citing human rights abuses, preservation of life, respect for democratic will, etc., which appears to support the frameworks’ expectations of *actions on shared responsibility* (Yanacopulos and Hanlon, 66). However, the key here is the case of Burma, where the international community refused to invoke the R2P principle for an intervention, “....arguing that Burma did not pose a threat to international peace and security in the region, and that the internal affairs of the state did not have a place within the Security Council.”^{xl} Henceforth, it is apparent that *realpolitik* affects

the carrying out of humanitarian interventions, which is not surprising, for such interventions come with high economic and time costs, wherefore (especially in an economic crisis, as we currently are) such funds must be strategically located. Given this, it is illogical to problematize the use of humanitarian language as justification for pursuing interests (see Yanacopulos and Hanlon, 63).

As mentioned in our case study, Cyprus is strategically important; however, Turkey is even more so, given its rising influence in the turbulent Middle-East region and its serving as a stable bridge between natural gas and Europe. Interventions against Turkey might lead to a war unless handled extremely carefully. Even if not, is it not rationally fair to say that the sacrifice of the culture of around one to two hundred thousand people is an acceptable price to pay to ensure regional stability in the Middle-East? Hence, it is clear that, through a *realpolitik* sense, *ignorance vis-à-vis the TRNC is bliss*. Lastly, as the stronger groups make better allies and yet as the strong tend to be the oppressors of another's culture, the *realpolitik* norms of the international realm will probably not ever allow interventions based on cultural preservation.

Conclusions: A Bleak Vision of the Future

The infectiousness of crime is like that of the plague.

~ Napoleon Bonaparte

Throughout this paper, we have asserted that culture is a need and a right for all humans and human groups, and that a cultural genocide is being committed against the Turkish Cypriot people in the North of Cyprus. However, we have also observed that, even with the declaration of the International Responsibility to Protect principles, the problems of nonviolent crimes, such as *cultural genocide*, are beyond the 'sensor range' of the international system's radars and will not

be recognized, let alone dealt with. We have also underlined the unfruitfulness of assuming that humanitarian interventions will be carried out simply because they are internationally-shared responsibilities.

The ontological loopholes in the rigid framework of the international community cause a failure to adapt to the evolving nature of mass atrocities. Historically, *genocidal crimes* – one the plagues of mankind – have evolved from mass killings to politicizes/mass oppression of will based on the reactions from the international community; and currently, we are observing yet another evolution of the crime into *cultural genocide* by the way of *forceful minoritization* and *forced assimilation*, etc., and we can expect that the international order and community will (time and again) fail to prevent or deal with such atrocities for the foreseeable future. The case of the TRNC has demonstrated that people without a properly representative/internationally unrecognized state will not be able to reach out to the international community, as it currently is, if ever victimized. Nonviolent crimes simply cannot be stopped under the current international regime; i.e. the concept of humanitarian interventions is ill-fitting to the international realm. The statues of Budha in Bamiyan in the hands of Taliban only garnered soft responses. Meanwhile, many churches and mosques were regularly destroyed during the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia – again, with nary an international response or acknowledgment. These facts alarm us as to the eventual fate of the Uyghur Turks of China, the South Ossetians, and the Palestinians, to name a few.

To conclude, the international system is one which is based on liberal principles such as the R2P, but governed by realpolitik concerns – and international inaction and cognitive blindness is a result of this dissonance. Nonviolent crimes, as things stand, are more than likely to go unpunished, especially where the target group does not have considerable voice in the

international community through a state, wherefore it is only natural that the cultural genocide of the Turkish Cypriot community does not result in international action. Their culture will probably wither away, and this will transform the Cypriot Conflict as a whole – unless the international community can rediscover the political will it lost in Somalia, for R2P, while well-meant, is an unsalvageable inadequate *modus operandi*.

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ⁱ Please see the third section of this paper for its mainstream definitions

ⁱⁱ Please see: <http://www.preventgenocide.org/law/convention/text.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ Please see: <http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/world%20summit%20outcome%20doc%202005%281%29.pdf>

^{iv} I would like to acknowledge Professor Terrence Lyons's contributions in defining this research puzzle.

^v See: <http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/madrid1933-english.htm>; and, as one of my colleagues, Dr. Terrence Lyons would say, "The Vandals probably didn't like their culture being vandalized in this way".

^{vi} This is especially true for a collective identity. For more information on such identities, look at Pruitt and Kim, pp. 56-62 and Korostelina, Chapter 2.

^{vii} I use this term to refer to forceful changing of identities as being from one's preferred group will bring a baggage of discrimination in socio-economic realms, while the change to the culture of the 'enforcers' will not necessarily bring acceptance or any gains – a forced change through 'no gain vs. severe losses' calculations.

^{viii} Here, my assumption is that *cultural genocide* is defined as *a forceful change in the lifestyles, traditions, customs, etc. of a people*; it is an extreme type of *forced assimilation*, where *the other's* culture is seen as threatening, whereby in need of complete elimination.

^{ix} Needless to say, the paper might touch upon prospects on the Republic of Cyprus vs. TRNC and Republic of Turkey conflict, as considerations to one variable in this equation can be safely assumed to have some effect on the other.

^x While the events might constitute *crimes against humanity*, which is an accusation just as weighty as that of genocide, our research puzzle requires us to look specifically for 'traces' of genocide.

^{xi} For example, see: http://www.kibrispostasi.com/index.php/cat/35/news/51000/UserName/KIBRIS_HABERLERI - commentary posts by usernames Ufuk and Kemal (dated 04/07/2011) and Ufuk (dated 04/08/2011).

^{xii} A term which refers to those without religion or those who are non-Muslim, usually employed in the description of the Greek Cypriot and Greek peoples.

^{xiii} On this point, see also: http://www.kibrisgazetesi.com/index.php/cat/2/news/116799/UserName/lc_Haberler

^{xiv} See: http://www.kibrispostasi.com/index.php/cat/35/news/51000/UserName/KIBRIS_HABERLERI

^{xv} This label was also officially employed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish Prime Minister; see: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/yavruslaramadi-besleme-diyor/kadri-gursel/dunya/yazardetay/10.02.2011/1350340/default.htm>

^{xvi} <http://www.keremdoksat.com/2007/04/09/bir-turkumuz-ve-turk%E2%80%99umuz-daha-yok-mu/>

^{xvii} <http://www.starkibris.net/index.asp?haberID=94921>

^{xviii} This I can attest to from personal experience. As my father is from Turkey, and I feel half-Turkish, I always felt the need to correct my friends and classmates whenever such demeaning labels were utilized in my presence, which was quite frequently.

^{xix} See Ozersay's work.

^{xx} See <http://www.un.int/cyprus/scr541.htm>

^{xxi} See

[http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2006.nsf/All/5AB01EE1CD8FB2A8C22571D2002BB60E/\\$file/European%20Court%20of%20Human%20Rights.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2006.nsf/All/5AB01EE1CD8FB2A8C22571D2002BB60E/$file/European%20Court%20of%20Human%20Rights.pdf?OpenElement)

^{xxii} While we *could* attempt to fit death-lists as ideologically-based hit lists, for example, this project falls outside of the scope of this paper.

^{xxiii} See, for example: http://www.kibrispostasi.com/index.php/cat/35/news/51000/pagename/kibris_haberleri and

http://www.kibrispostasi.com/index.php/cat/35/news/58636/UserName/KIBRIS_HABERLERI and

<http://www.starkibris.net/index.asp?haberID=96479> and, for a video, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wh8ggXlth5k>.

^{xxiv} See http://www.birgun.net/actuels_index.php?news_code=1311079291&year=2011&month=07&day=19

^{xxv} See <http://www.yeniduzen.com/detay.asp?a=36887>

^{xxvi} See <http://www.yeniduzen.com/detay.asp?a=37904&z=19>

^{xxvii} http://www.samanyoluhaber.com/h_721836_Dunya-kktcnin-nufus-sayisi-aciklandi.html

^{xxviii} I have obtained this information through a secondary source [name withheld, as the conversation was not held for interview purposes and thus no confidentiality agreement was made] from TRNC, where the numbers were broadcast on the national television, BRTK.

^{xxix} See, for example: http://www.kibrispostasi.com/index.php/cat/1/col/178/art/13712/UserName/KIBRIS_POSTASI; <http://www.yeniduzen.com/detay.asp?a=37884&z=19>; and <http://www.haberkktc.com/yazar/kim-inanir---907.html>

^{xxx} See, for example: http://www.kibrissosyalistpartisi.org/ksp/kspweb/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1 and http://www.kibrisgazetesi.com/index.php/cat/2/news/129181/PageIndex/Ic_Haberler

^{xxxi} See: <http://www.yeniduzen.com/detay.asp?a=37886&z=3> for the reactions of the largest union.

^{xxxii} See: <http://www.yeniduzen.com/detay.asp?a=37886&z=3> for the reactions of the largest union.

^{xxxiii} It declares a subscriber number of 280,000 as of 2006; see: <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/kktcde-toplam-abone-sayisi-280-bin-28051.htm>

^{xxxiv} It claims a subscriber number of 336,000 as of 2010; see: <http://www.sys.com.tr/haberler.asp?b=d&ID=6&AltID=72&ID2=203>

^{xxxv} See <http://www.ykp.org.cy/population/kibrisinkuzevindekinufus.pdf>, 3.

^{xxxvi} While this number seems extremely large and exaggerated from a neutral point of view, my own observations in Cyprus (while subject to my own biases, of course) beg me to approach this number less skeptically.

^{xxxvii} <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/COM/370-580058?OpenDocument>

^{xxxviii} See footnotes 2 and 3, respectively.

^{xxxix} We are taking it as a fact that Turkish Cypriots are a distinct group under cultural genocide

^{xl} <http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/about-rtop/learn-about-rtop>

^{xli} Where is Cyprus Headed?

^{xlii} An Island Called Cyprus.

^{xliii} Mind-blockage in Cyprus.

^{xliv} Cyprus Dilemma.

^{xlv} The Turkish Cypriot Identity as the Will to Want One's Selfhood Back: Simply Cypriotness.

^{xlvi} Cypriotness.

^{xlvi} The Turkish Cypriot's Search for Identity and Politicization in the Aftermath of 1974.

^{xlvi} The Cultural Aspects of the Cyprus Question.

^{xlvi} The Cyprus Helix: What Kind of a Solution?